

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) An atraumatic surgical needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~ having two tips ~~(12,12')~~ and ~~consisting of~~ comprising a tubular metal shaft ~~[[with]]~~ that is hollow from tip to tip, at least one of the tips being open, the shaft having a central portion that is equipped with a hole ~~[[ (10) ]]~~, through which emerges a surgical thread ~~[[ (13) ]]~~ that is anchored inside the needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~.

2. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein the tips ~~(12,12')~~ are bevelled in one or more oblique planes and the hole ~~[[ (10) ]]~~ through which the thread passes involves only one wall of the hollow shaft.

3. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein one end of the surgical thread ~~[[ (13) ]]~~ is inserted into the hole ~~[[ (10) ]]~~ of the needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~ and is anchored by means of pinching the needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~.

4. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surgical thread ~~[[ (13) ]]~~ is equipped with a knot ~~[[ (14) ]]~~.

5. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein the end of the surgical thread ~~[[ (13) ]]~~ is inserted into the hole ~~[[ (10) ]]~~ of the atraumatic two-tipped needle ~~[[ (11) ]]~~, is made to emerge from one end ~~[[ (12) ]]~~, is

equipped with a knot [(14)] and is then drawn back inside the shaft towards the hole [(10)].

6. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surgical thread [(13)], equipped in advance with a knot [(14)], is inserted into one end of the needle [(11)] and is made to emerge through the hole [(10)].

7. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 1, wherein the end of the surgical thread [(13)] is inserted into the hole [(10)] and is anchored inside the atraumatic two-tipped needle [(11)] by means of a scotch [(15)], which is pushed down inside the needle from one of the two ends (12,12').

8. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 7, wherein the scotch [(15)] may consist of a solid bar or a portion of tube, made of metal or plastic, the calibre of which is determined by the diameter of the needle [(11)].

9. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 7, wherein the scotch [(15)], when it has been placed in its final-position, is anchored inside the needle [(11)] by pinching, or by means of glue [(16)] or other suitable fixing material.

10. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surgical thread [(13)] is fixed to the needle [(11)] by means of a single- or dual-component glue or other solidifying material suited to the purpose.

11. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 1, wherein the end of the surgical thread [(13)] inserted into the hole [(10)] emerges from one end (12,12') of the needle [(11)], and is inserted and fixed into a hole in one end of a scotch, which is subsequently inserted into the needle [(11)].

12. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surgical thread [(13)] is fixed between the coils of a tiny spring, which is then inserted into the atraumatic two-tipped needle [(11)].

13. (currently amended) The atraumatic surgical needle [(11)] as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surgical thread [(13)] is fixed by means of two or more anchoring techniques.